



Nigeria - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Monday 18 & Tuesday 19 August 2014

Treatment of apostates

In July 2014 a publication issued by the *United States Department of State* points out that:

“Some Muslims or Christians who converted to another religion reportedly faced threats and ostracism by adherents of their former religion. In some northern states, those wishing to convert to Islam were strongly encouraged to apply to the sharia council for a letter of conversion to be sent to their families, which served to dissolve marriages to Christians and to request Hisbah protection from reprisals by relatives. Similar procedures did not exist for those converting to Christianity” (United States Department of State (28 July 2014) *2013 International Religious Freedom Report – Nigeria*).

A report released in March 2014 by the *Jubilee Campaign* notes that:

“Muslim converts are generally forced to flee into hiding to avoid death for apostasy” (Jubilee Campaign (7 March 2014) *Written statement* submitted by Jubilee Campaign, a nongovernmental organization in special consultative status*, p.3).

Research issued in November 2012 by the *Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada* states:

“The Hausa-Fulani and related groups located in the north of Nigeria rely on the “Arab world” for “religious, socio-cultural and political inspirations.” This means that they may see themselves as “the bastion of opposition against the spread of Christianity and Western culture in Nigeria.” Since the leaders of the Hausa-Fulani community view with “grave concern” the “increasing Western influence” among their people, conversion from Islam to Christianity by their members is also regarded as a “treasonable act.” Those who convert are “ostracized” by members of their community and cease to benefit from the protection and patronage from both the government of their states and Muslim kinsmen, and are, therefore, “prone to [en]danger their lives.” “ (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (8 November 2012) *Nigeria: Treatment of Christians who convert to Islam; treatment of Muslims who convert to Christianity; information on state protection for mistreated religious converts*).

No further information on this issue could be found among sources available to the RDC.

References

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (8 November 2012) *Nigeria: Treatment of Christians who convert to Islam; treatment of Muslims who convert to Christianity; information on state protection for mistreated religious converts*

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Jubilee Campaign (7 March 2014) *Written statement* submitted by Jubilee Campaign, a nongovernmental organization in special consultative status*
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United States Department of State (28 July 2014) *2013 International Religious Freedom Report – Nigeria*
http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/281964/399059_en.html
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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

Amnesty International
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European Country of Origin Information Network
Freedom House
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
International Crisis Group
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